

ALLEGED GERMAN SPY MAY SUFFER DEATH PENALTY

Official Interest Turns Largely Upon Trial of Spoermann.

QUESTION OF MILITARY OR CIVIL JURISDICTION

Secret Service Net Gathers In Brother and Acquaintance in Baltimore.

HIS FIANCEE IS CONFIDENT

Says She Has Known Him Three Years, and Is Sure He Can Prove His Innocence.

[By Associated Press.]—Much interest was displayed today in the case of Walter Spoermann, the alleged German spy arrested at the new army aviation depot near Morrison, Va., but, so far as could be learned, the only official report was that sent to the naval intelligence bureau by the officer who made the capture, who gave no details as to the circumstances of the charge preferred.

The War Department was without official information, although Spoermann is reported to have been caught within the limits of the aviation depot.

Official interest turned largely upon the question whether Spoermann would be brought before a civil court or be turned over to a military tribunal, where the sentence upon conviction of spying would carry the extreme penalties. Cases of this character come under one of three legal codes: the espionage act, the articles of war or the articles for the government of the navy. Both the military and naval codes were left intact in the espionage act, and both carry the death penalty for spying in a zone of operations. A sentence up to thirty years and a \$1,000 fine is allowed under the act.

UNDER ARTICLES OF WAR.

DEATH IS SPY'S PORTION

The eighty-second article of war, under which the army derives authority to deal with charges of espionage, states that any person who in time of war shall be found lurking or acting as a spy in or about any of the fortifications, posts, quarters or encampments of any of the armies of the United States or elsewhere shall be tried by a general court-martial, and shall, upon conviction, suffer death.

Under the regime of Secretary Stimson it was held that the eighty-second article could only apply in the actual zone of military operations. Recently, however, military authorities broadened the interpretation of the term to make it include all the territory of the United States, even if 5,000 miles from the actual battle ground. This interpretation is said to be based on the fact that now the entire nation fights wars, and not armies only.

SUSPECTED GERMAN SPY

IS TAKEN TO BALTIMORE

Spoermann was taken to Baltimore today. He was rushed from the railroad station to the United States marshal's office, and thence lodged in jail.

Hours previous to his arrest, his brother, Frederick H. C. Spoermann, who was arrested last night, was sent to jail also.

Another man, Marius Arsch, of Baltimore, was taken into custody today by Federal agents, and there was a considerable display of activity and conferences at the Federal offices, with rumors that other suspects were being bagged.

Arsch, it developed, held some papers belonging to Lieutenant Spoermann. He himself volunteered the information to the Baltimore police, and he was taken in charge by United States officers until the papers were seized.

Little, apparently, of any incriminating nature was discovered among the papers. Arsch explained that he had been acquainted with Spoermann for some time, and that Spoermann left a suit case containing papers with him. At that time, Arsch said, he was working in a luncheon, and Spoermann merely asked him to take charge of the suit case.

There is secrecy among the government officials as to the number arrested in connection with the Spoermann case, though reports indicate seven or eight men are in custody.

FIANCEE OF ACCUSED MAN

CONFIDENT OF HIS INNOCENCE

Miss May Stoop, fiancée of Walter Spoermann, says she is confident Spoermann can prove his innocence. Miss Stoop is an American girl and a violinist. Her home is in Baltimore, but she is now in Washington. She is about twenty-two years old.

In a statement to-night she said she had known Spoermann three years, and had been engaged to him a year. They intended to marry when the war was ended, she asserted.

"I was dumfounded when I read that Walter had been arrested and charged with being a spy," said Miss Stoop. "Although on account of him being a German I have been opposed to him being employed around here, I told him so several times while we were discussing stories in the newspapers about spies and plots, but he said that he liked the employment."

"I saw the statement that Mr. Spoermann had landed in this country on a German boat at Newport, R. I., about a year ago, the U-S-B, and that he was a German naval officer. I know that he has been in this country for six or seven years. It was also said that Walter had received large sums of money. I don't believe

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SENATE COMMITTEE FAVORS ROAD BILLS

Reports Plan for System of State Highways to Cost \$20,000,000.

MONEY NOW THROWN AWAY

Senator Goolrick Says Virginia Has Squandered Millions in Road Patching.

A long and sane step towards the State highway system, a web of the most vitally important roads in the State measuring about 3,500 miles, to be built by State and Federal money and maintained principally by the automobile fund, which amounted to more than \$500,000 last year, was taken by a Senate Standing Committee on Roads and Navigation when that committee voted by a unanimous ballot to report with slight amendments to the Senate, Senate bills Nos. 21, 22 and 23, which provide for this system.

This system was formulated by the commission appointed in 1916 by the General Assembly composed of three members of the Senate—Messrs. Goolrick, Robertson and Byrd—and four members of the House. It is virtually the same system recommended by State Highway Commissioner George P. Coleman in his last annual report. It incorporates in its network the road desired by the National Bankhead Highway Association, seeking to connect the Eastern cities with the road of that name running throughout the South and Southwest of the United States.

SELECTS 3,500 MILES

AS THROUGH STATE ROADS

In presenting these bills to the committee, their patron, Senator C. O'Connor Goolrick, of Fredericksburg, said that there were 52,000 miles of road in this State, and that the commission had, after two years of study, selected 3,500 miles of road vitally important to the State as a whole, and estimated the approximate cost of its improvement at \$20,000,000. This sum, he said, was a great deal in view of the fact that Virginia did not have it in sight at this immediate hour, but that it was very slight in view of the fact that numerous counties of the State had each spent over \$1,000,000. He stated that he hated to say it, but that it was a fact that Virginia had squandered millions of dollars in crazy patchwork of little bits of road in hundreds of magisterial districts throughout the State without any view of continuity or access of points, and with little attention to their upkeep.

The passage of these bills will mean that the State of Virginia will raise \$700,000 to meet the requirements of the Federal offer of that amount as a Federal aid. A joint resolution was introduced in the House of Delegates yesterday to allow an amendment to the Virginia Constitution to permit the issuance of bonds for the purpose of raising that amount, which would put in the hands of the State Highway Commissioner \$1,000,000 to construct the proposed State system of highways. While a light may arise over this point, yet the sentiment was voiced that surely Virginia would not neglect this opportunity of receiving badly needed Federal aid.

COUNTIES TO IMPROVE

LESS TRAVELED ROADS

Senator Goolrick stated that the idea of the commission was to segregate the system mapped out from the other State roads and maintain them by the State automobile fund. He thinks that if the State will do this, and that it should, that the counties will, as a matter of course, assume the building of the rest of the 52,000 miles of highway in the State. No intention on the part of the commission exists to refuse aid from themselves.

Senate bill No. 21, which was also reported with slight amendments, provides for the employment of all male convict labor that is physically fit in the construction of the State system of highways. This allows for the completion of contracts already in force, as any other course would be an act of bad faith on the part of the State in cases wherein the counties have acted on the agreement of the State. Mr. Goolrick stated that the convict labor was very much better than that provided by the State road fund, as has been shown in the case of the county that acted itself of the State contract letting out convict labor; that therefore he is in favor of concentrating such labor on the State system.

Senator Goolrick stated, however, that he was in favor of continuing the State aid fund of \$100,000 and increasing it to \$200,000, since many counties were in the process of road building acting on the accessibility of that fund.

Senate bill No. 23, which was reported with slight amendments, merely accepts the offer of Federal aid, and declares the intention of the State to construct this system of highways.

STRONG CONSTRUCTIVE

PIECE OF LEGISLATION

On the part of the National Bankhead Highway, Mr. Ryland, general manager of the Chamber of Commerce of Lynchburg, was heard by the committee. He called the work of the commission appointed to formulate plans for the system of State highways the most constructive piece of work done by any committee appointed by the General Assembly in the history of Virginia. He showed how the system of roads was the thing about which progress would radiate as around nothing else, and called the absence of such the greatest menace to civilization. He called the ward system in the cities and the district system in the counties a great menace to successful road building and other forms of progress. He then asked for an additional road of about fifty miles additional.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY GETS DOWN TO WORK

Committees Start on Their Way Series of Important Bills.

COMMISSIONERS CONFIRMED

Bill Creating Jobs for Three Movie Censors Is Held Up in Committee.

Confirmation of the nominations of Alexander Forward and Christopher B. Barnett, chosen by Governor Stuart for Corporation Commissioners, and the adoption of a resolution to appoint a committee to arrange for the inauguration of Westmoreland Davis as Governor of Virginia comprised the bulk of the General Assembly's work in yesterday's session. The rest of the day was given over to committee meetings, in which many important bills received their first consideration.

During the session the usual quantity of greater and lesser bills found their way into the legislative hopper. Among them was one by Senator Jeffrey. This asks for the creation of the office of State architect, and is aimed at decreasing the large sum annually paid for school building plans. Senator Jeffrey pointed out that the State has paid more than \$250,000 to architects for school buildings during the past eleven years. A single concern was paid \$52,000 of this amount.

WANTS TAXPAYERS

TO COME FORWARD

Another interesting bill was introduced in the House by Delegate Howard G. Gilmer. It would compel taxpayers residing in towns of more than 1,000 population to go to the revenue commissioner to be assessed. Under the existing law the taxpayer is visited by the commissioner or his deputy. Mr. Gilmer says his bill will save much expense if it becomes law.

The House Appropriations Committee held its first meeting in the afternoon, and heard the plea of Major Wood, Superintendent of the State Penitentiary, for increased annual appropriation and a special appropriation of \$25,000 to cover last year's deficit occasioned by increased cost of supplies. The special appropriation bill was reported favorably for immediate passage. Chairman Bremer stated that he hoped to have the general appropriation bill passed two weeks before adjournment.

The motion picture censorship bill was held up by Committee on General Laws pending an investigation by a subcommittee. Delegate Carrington opposed the measure for the reason that it would create additional places on the State pay roll for professional opinion seekers.

APPOINTMENT OF THREE CENSORS TO DRAW SALARIES OF \$2,500 EACH, and is modeled from the Maryland act, which compels censorship of all pictures and the payment of \$2 for each examination.

DEFERS ACTION ON

COMPULSORY LABOR BILL

This committee also deferred action on the Dodson compulsory labor bill, which would authorize the Governor to draft into industrial service all idle males between the ages of sixteen and fifty in time of war. The same bill was introduced in the Senate by Senator Mapp. The House committee will await the Senate's action.

The Committee on Courts of Justice reported favorably the bill to make marriage of the wronged by the accused a bar to prosecution in cases involving a girl below fifteen years old. Bills to prevent professional jurism, to grant amnesty to soldiers, to grant pay to families of men convicted of treason, and to make the statute of limitations as to enforcement of judgments twenty years, were put in the hands of a subcommittee for investigation of their relation with the new code.

MANY ARE HOMELESS

Hurricane Sweeps Through Roanoke Island, Blowing Houses From Foundations and Injuring Twelve.

[By Associated Press.]

NORFOLK, VA., January 15.—Many people are homeless and in an almost starving condition on Cape Hatteras and on Roanoke Island, N. C., as a result of a severe hurricane that visited that section today, blowing sixteen houses from their foundations and wrecking four of them completely. This section has been suffering severely from food shortage since the beginning of the recent cold wave, water transportation—the only means of ingress or egress from Roanoke Island—having been cut off by ice. The hurricane has accentuated this condition.

Immediately after the hurricane fifty people attempted to leave Roanoke Island on the steamer E. R. Daniels, but were forced to put in to Mobjack on account of the ice. Most of the damage done by the hurricane was on Roanoke Island, and it is there that most of the suffering from food shortage is reported.

At one time the wind attained a velocity of seventy-four miles an hour. Twelve people are known to have been injured, but it could not be learned late to-night whether there were any fatalities.

THREE KILLED IN CRASH

Three Coaches Plunge From Bridge Into River Forty Feet Below.

BELOIT, KAN., January 15.—Three persons were killed and twenty-six injured when the Beloit-Solomon local of the Union Pacific plunged through a bridge into Plum Creek, four miles east of here today.

The engine and baggage cars cleared the bridge before it gave way, but three coaches plunged into the water forty feet below.

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RUSH COAL TRAINS OVER OPEN ROUTES

Fuel Administration Struggles to Conquer Traffic-Paralyzing Weather Conditions.

WORST SITUATION IN YEARS

Damaged Engines and Frozen Cars Add to Handicaps of Increasing Storms.

[By Associated Press.]—Against the worst general snow and ice storm of a generation, the government railroad administration today struggled in an effort to open main-traveled routes and keep coal and food shipments moving over the lines best able to handle them. The situation to-night was regarded as worse than at any time within the last week of traffic-paralyzing weather. On top of an accumulation of snow in the Middle West from blizzards of several days ago came fresh snowfall today. Snow plows went to work on the new drifts, while gangs of laborers, drawn from every occupation from which they could be spared, tackled yards and terminals already cleared once of snow within the week.

Temperatures were rising in most sections to-night, but it was not warm enough to release cars frozen to sidings or to thaw thousands of cars of coal caked in their carriers. Telegraph and telephone wires went down under weight of snow and ice, and many passenger trains whose schedules had been re-established yesterday were withdrawn once again lest they meet the fate of scores of others stalled behind drifts.

Only coal and food kept moving, and these went slowly. The railroad supply of locomotives, depleted by the hundreds in shops for repairs, were used largely for these shipments. Two, three or four engines tugged at a train of coal in many instances.

Officials to-night believed it would be only a matter of days before some industries would be forced to close by inability to get fuel. The snow cannot melt and the weather moderate fast enough. It was said, to restore normal movement of coal to meet the extraordinary war demands. Measures are being planned to safeguard domestic and public utilities' needs and to distribute the remainder to the most advantage.

CAR SERVICE COMMISSION

ORDERS TRANSFER OF CARS

Railroad officials acknowledged they could do little against the weather except to distribute cars, locomotives and snow plows and snow-fighting apparatus to the districts where the need is greatest. Accordingly, the American Railway Association's car service commission issued many orders for transfer of cars to certain lines.

The anthracite mines of Pennsylvania got their full supply of cars, about 2,300 being loaded during the day, and coal went to New England by all the rail gateways and by water from Hampton Roads.

Investigations by the Interstate Commerce Commission's inspectors, working under direction of Commissioner McCord, disclosed hundreds of coal cars on sidings in the East blocked behind lines of almost immovable freight cars, destined for points already suffering from fuel shortage.

Freight-moving work, although recognized in telegram from a number of commercial organizations to-day, seemed almost snowed under. Director-General McAdoo spent nearly two hours discussing the Mid-Western storm conditions with R. H. Ashton, president of the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad, who had been summoned here for a conference, and there were reports that Mr. Ashton would be named formally as Mr. McAdoo's representative about Chicago to supervise transportation, as A. H. Smith is doing in the East.

In his determination to clear up congestion about the Washington terminals, the director-general replaced A. W. Thompson, vice-president of the Baltimore and Ohio, with George R. Loyall, assistant vice-president of the Southern, as transportation director in charge, with instructions to do anything necessary to get results. Mr. Thompson's heavy duties in connection with his own road, it was explained, prevented him from devoting all his time to the Washington situation.

To-morrow Mr. McAdoo will confer with a number of State railroad commissioners who wish to give assurance of their co-operation under government ownership and inquire about the railroad administration's intentions toward State commissions' authority.

The director-general also will meet a delegation from the National Industrial Traffic League, an organization of shippers, who are prepared to assist in clearing up the prevailing congestion. Mr. McAdoo expects to announce to-morrow or Thursday the personnel of the board of four to investigate the brotherhoods' wage demands, and as soon as possible wants to take up other pending labor questions. Petitions are beginning to come in from train dispatchers all over the country asking higher pay. These employees are not formally organized.

Girl Slain; Three Negroes Arrested.

[By Associated Press.]

HAZELHURST, MISS., January 15.—Following the fading late today of the mutilated body of seventeen-year-old Vera Willis in the woods near her home, two miles from here, posers were formed and bloodhounds sent to the scene. Three negroes were arrested shortly after the finding of the body. A heavy piece of wood or a pine knot apparently was used by the murderer.

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Bill to Enforce National Food Saving by Law, During War, Before Congress

[By Associated Press.]—Stricter economy of food is to be required of the American people by new laws put in the making to-day in Congress. Food Administrator Hoover has approved them, and they are expected to pass promptly as supplemental to the present food control act.

Wholesale and meatless days and other economies are necessary that America may help sustain her co-belligerents throughout the world. Such new laws, the food administration holds, are necessary to protect the millions of loyal Americans co-operating in the food saving against the wastefulness of a few which are said to handle probably 50 per cent of the food supply.

In the Senate the measure was introduced by Senator Duncanson. In the House it was introduced by Chairman Lever, of the Agricultural Committee, who made a statement explaining its provisions.

The bill was referred to committees in both houses. It provides that wherever the President shall find that it is essential to limit further unrestricted use, manufacture, sale or distribution of food and food-stuffs, he may, by proclamation, modify, limit or discontinue their use to the extent necessary to assure an adequate supply. The President would be authorized to issue rules and regulations, which might vary from time to time to meet changing conditions, and in carrying out the proposed law may utilize any department, agency or officer of the government.

Any person who failed or refused to modify, limit or discontinue the sale, manufacture or distribution of such articles would be guilty of a misdemeanor and punishable by a maximum \$5,000 fine and six years' imprisonment. The law would cease to be in effect when the war between the United States and Germany is over.

Knowing War Is Lost, Despair Fills Heart of the Huns With Rage

Hope of Quarrels in Allied Ranks Inspires Germans to Keep Up Fight.

[A more vivid, thrilling, humorous, witty, gruesome, zippy and rollicking story of life in the trenches has never been written. The narrator of this "Life in the Trenches" is a young Scotchman, who at the outbreak of the war was employed in the capacity of a humble clerk in a London bank. He tells the story of his numberless adventures from the day of his landing at a certain French port to the time when he was "tagged for Blighty." Participant in more than twenty "battles," fifty "raids" and three "great pushes," wounded eight times, but never asked to be "sent home," each time returning to the battle line, for he was "homesome for the trenches and the Fritzies," cursing at misfortune, with always a smile on his lips; now laughing, now sighing, but never grumbling, this wonderful specimen of Scotch grit and English sportsmanship tells a story that keeps his reader always near him—feeling his every impulse, cursing when he curses and laughing when he laughs.]

BY PRIVATE JOHN C. McELWEN.

That wound of mine did not keep me away from our dear Fritzies very long. It only scratched the thick part of my right leg, and three days of recuperation at an improvised hospital behind the firing line fitted me up again.

Really I could hardly keep quiet all night when the hospital orderly informed me that on the next day I would be permitted to return to my company.

By the way, that night—the night before the morning on which I was due at the front—batches of Hun prisoners were brought in. One of the hospital officials ordered about fifty of us to go out with sandwiches and coffee and administer the "first aid" to the Hun's empty stomachs. The poor devils! There were about a thousand in the horde, and the whole outfit looked starved.

We went out with the food, and what do you think the Fritzies did? Well, they made for us instantly, and we had our hands full in keeping the hungry Fritzies in line.

As soon as their stomachs were filled up with good British food, the Huns began to quarrel amongst themselves, and in another instant the Huns were fighting the Huns.

Now these Huns would not mind us British privates. So I ran to the company headquarters and informed an officer that the Fritzies were scrapping amongst themselves, and that the presence of an officer was required.

A captain with a whip in his hand rushed to the cage with me, but, I believe, our officer had hardly reached the grounds when the Fritzies were separated like a bunch of tomatoes, who were raising a racket in the backyard, that got a cold bath thrown from a bucket of water from a back kitchen window.

OFFICERS BADLY TREATED

BY INDIGNANT PRISONERS

After the scrap we went inside the cage on an investigation tour. The whole trouble was this: After the Fritzies were fed, their officers began to reproach them for not having fought further instead of surrendering. Now, Fritz had enough of his officers' bullying, and even our dear and patient Fritz had his limitations in standing everything that his Hun superior handed to him at the end of his boot. It was a real sight, what the indignant Fritzies had done to their overbearing saps. But we were not going to discipline the Fritzies for that. That was one offense against good manners the Fritzies had committed for which we could afford to stretch our palms and say, "Here is a shake, old Fritz, do it again, but please do not make so much noise while doing it next time. You know it is against the international law to kill your officers."

Just before I withdrew to my bunk I got engaged in conversation with one of the Fritzies. This Fritz spoke English with a lilt and a twang, and told me in good old English that so far as he was concerned, the war was over, and the Fatherland could go to hell.

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NO LAPSE IN NEWS

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Any Moment May Bring Greatest Shake-Up Since Days of Bismarck.

EVERYTHING POINTS TO ANNEXATIONIST STAMPEDE

Chancellor von Hertling and Foreign Minister von Kuehlmann Practically Out.

PEACE DEALINGS ARE OFF

Roumanian Diplomatic Staff at Petrograd Arrested by Lenin Government.

AMSTERDAM, January 15.—Germany's internal political crisis is fast approaching its climax. Any moment may bring the greatest governmental shake-up the empire has known since the days of Bismarck.

Count von Hertling, the Imperial Chancellor, and Dr. von Kuehlmann were considered in Berlin late to-night virtually out of office, the only question being as to who will succeed them.

Everything points to a ruthless, smashing annexationist stampede upon the responsible official positions of the empire. Every man in the present government who does not unqualifiedly adhere to the gospel of a "strong peace, a German peace," is to be hit by the militarist axe, and a militarist will step up to take his place.

The Kaiser, his generals and those of his advisers who swear by annexation, and even indemnities, are haunted, it is said, by the fear that a backdown before the Russian now will open the empire's eastern gateway to terrorism; that it would be a matter of weeks, perhaps of days, before Bolshevism would undermine the army and navy and re-enact the story of the Russian revolution in Germany.

Thoroughly in the grip of that fear, the Kaiser and many of his advisers hitherto leaning to the moderate cause have been definitely converted. It is said, to the Hindenburg-Ludendorff doctrine of "blood and iron" based on the all-powerful argument that the ground-work of the nation and the fate of the crown itself is at stake.

The decision has been reached, therefore, it is reported, to defy the Reichstag majority and come out openly before all the world for the gospel of "might is right" and to enforce it, if necessary, in the empire itself by a military dictatorship.

Against that plan, the Liberals are making the fight of their lives, a valiant, but, according to all symptoms, a losing, fight. Mass-meetings are held in every part of the Fatherland, at which renunciation of the annexationist doctrine is clamored for by such influential men as Dr. Dernburg. Even a Junker meeting, Berlin dispatches state, was turned into a spirited demonstration against conquest, the militarist speakers being howled down by the crowd, which then spoke its own mind.

PRESIDENT WILSON'S PEACE

AIMS FREELY REFERRED TO

In hundreds of cities huge meetings adopted resolutions for a "conciliatory general peace." In all speeches President Wilson's latest speech of peace aims was clearly reflected, for his main principles were heartily endorsed, though not everywhere with open reference to him.

In this nation-wide manifestation for a democratic peace, the crown and the brains that form its pillars see the first step toward Bolshevism; out of the pacifist speeches they hear the first vagrant grumblings of a people sick and tired of autocracy and militarism.

Late to-night the news from Berlin gave still another angle to the significance of the endless deliberations between the Emperor and his army chiefs. Once the Reichstag majority has been defied, only one thing can avert revolt, in the opinion of some of the Teuton military leaders—an immediate terrific offensive in the west. That, and that alone, they argue, can create the imperative diversion.

Opposing the moderates, and paving the way for the expected repudiation of the Reichstag resolution by the Junkers on their part, are active throughout the empire agitators for a "German peace." Men like Admiral von Tirpitz, Count Reventlow, and others are clamoring for conquest not only in the east, but in the west as well, and for indemnities thrown in.

Next to Bolshevism, the greatest inspiring thoughts of the militarists is that this internal dissension will undermine the forces. Herein is seen another argument why Germany must and will strike soon in the west. Hindenburg had hoped to postpone the drive, hoping for better weather and banking on the U-boat as an ally. But the past seven days' events are said to have changed his mind.

Chancellor von Hertling's speech before the Reichstag main committee is expected to be his swan song. Precisely when it will be delivered is still uncertain. It was scheduled for Monday, but he is now reported "ill."

VON HERTLING CALLED IN

TO COUNSEL WITH KAISER

Von Tschelow looms as the most likely successor to Hertling, according to Berlin advice. Among the statesmen who hurried to Berlin and who are counseling the Kaiser is Count von Bernstorff, now stationed at Constantinople. He has been variously described as a militarist. Those who know him best incline to the view that he is the cleverest "camouflage artist" in the Kaiser's diplomatic corps. Only the truth of

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